

The Power of the Gospel

A
DISCOURSE,
PREACHED JUNE 20th, 1841,

BY CHARLES FITCH,

IN REVIEW OF A SERMON BY
REV. OTIS A. SKINNER,

AT THE INSTALLATION OF
REV. T. P. ABELL,
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ROMANS 1: 16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The object of this discourse is, to discharge a solemn duty, both to God and men,-to God, that His name may be glorified, and to men, that their souls may be saved. In relation to my fellow men, I can truly say, that "I seek not mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved." And also, that "my hearts desire and prayer to God" for every man "is that he may be saved."

I was passing the Universalist Church, in this village, the other day, at a time when an installation service was in progress, and after revolving in my own mind the question, whether I would be likely

to get good, or to do good by attending such a service, I was led, as I trust, by the Spirit of God to enter.

After listening to the discourse which was preached on the occasion, and to the other services, I remembered the words of God to the prophet Ezekiel, contained in the third chapter of the writings of that prophet. "Son of man, "I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity: but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way; he

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shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul." Again, "when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned: Also thou hast delivered thy soul." In the thirty-third chapter of the same prophet, we read as follows: "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of my people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts and set him for a watchman; If when he see the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet and warn the people, then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning, if the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet and took not warning, his blood shall be upon him; but he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood

will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the House of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul." Now God has made me a watchman for the welfare of souls. To Him I stand accountable. No man can deliver me from responsibility in relation to his soul. If I see danger, and can make my voice heard, and warn him not, God has said, "his blood will I require at thine hand." Now I see danger to immortal souls in this community, by the efforts which are made to persuade men to the

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belief of the doctrine of Universal Salvation; and it is the voice of God that calls me, and the authority of God that commands me to lift the note of warning. Many may refuse to hear, but I must obey God and deliver my own soul, by endeavoring faithfully and plainly, yet affectionately, to lift the note of warning.

The discourse to which I allude was preached from the words which I have placed at the head of this. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." The object of the preacher was, to show in what the power of the Gospel consisted.

From the commencement, he assumed it as the design of the gospel, to save men from sin, and thereby prepare them for heaven; and it was therefore his object to show in what the power of the gospel to save men consisted.

Now, that the preacher was right in his assumption, that it is the design of the gospel to save men from sin, I am fully prepared to admit. I believe it may have been true, in some cases, at least, that this grand truth has been kept out of sight; while the gospel has been held forth as rather a way of salvation from hell, than from sin. Now he who is saved from sin and preserved blameless, will

unquestionably find an immortality of bliss, for our Lord Jesus Christ has said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." We also find the following in the book of Psalms: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart," Let a man therefore be saved from sin, and the blessedness of his soul is sure; and equally true is it, that he who is not saved from sin, can never inherit the kingdom of God, "for there shall in no wise enter therein anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." We also learn that the design of the gospel is to save men from their sin, by the words of God to his ancient people Israel, respecting the object of that ceremonial worship, which was designed to point out Christ, and the end of his coming into the world. Lev. 16:30. "For on that day shall the priest make atonement for you to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." This idea of cleansing was ever kept in view in all that system of ceremonial worship-while

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the grand design of that system was to set forth Christ and the object of his coming into the world. Accordingly we are told by Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, that these rites and ceremonies "were a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices which could not make him that did the service, nor the comers thereunto perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood; he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. And for this cause," i. e. for the purpose of

purging us from dead works to serve the living God, "he is the Mediator of the New Testament." And we are told in the same epistle, what that New Testament is. "I will put any laws in their minds and write them in their hearts." As if to say, ye shall not be as were the Jews in the time of Christ, like whited sepulchres, beautiful indeed without, but full of all uncleanness within. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." It is therefore held forth in every part of the bible as the design of the salvation of the Gospel, to set men free from sin, and when they are thus effectually saved, there cannot be a doubt that they will find their blessedness here and hereafter in communion with God, as surely as he is a God of purity and love. Accordingly the angel that foretold the birth of our Saviour said, "Thou shall call his name Jesus," i. e. a Saviour, "for he shall save his people from their sins." Hence, also, we hear God saying,—"Behold I will bring forth out of Zion the Deliverer, and he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant with them when I shall take away

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their sins." I greatly rejoice, that it is beginning to be recognized more and more, as the great design of the gospel to make men pure and holy, and thereby "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." The danger on this point is, that men shall think themselves cleansed by the gospel, while in the sight of God they are still altogether unclean; or shall regard themselves as so sure of being cleansed at last, that they shall pass on uncleaned, until they die in their iniquities, and consequently find, that "where Christ has gone they never can come."

I know it has sometimes been said of Universalists, that they maintain that men of all characters will be taken to Heaven. This charge is manifestly false. They believe that all men will become holy, and then be received to heaven; and I rejoice to admit, that in assuming it as the grand and glorious design of the gospel, to save men from sin, they hold forth a sentiment which harmonizes with the whole tenor of sacred scripture. The fatal mistake which they embrace, is on another point, as I expect hereafter to show. The

Preacher of the sermon in question, in proceeding to show in what consisted the power of the gospel to save men from sin, remarked,

I. Negatively; that it did not consist, 1. In propitiatory worship. This he stated was the design of all heathen worship, and conveyed, as I understood him, the idea, that such worship was no better than heathenism. Now that men need a propitiatory sacrifice, in coming to God with acceptance, is very evident from the fact, that the bible teaches us, that Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. If therefore no propitiation had been necessary, God, certainly would never have provided one. But Christ, is ever to be regarded as an all sufficient propitiation: and I am fully prepared to admit, that if we bring before God any works or offerings of our own, as a propitiation, our worship must be no better in his sight than the worship of Pagans. For God has provided a propitiation that is all sufficient, and if I attempt to bring another, I treat that which God has offered as of no value, and set up some works or sacrifices of my own, as more meritorious

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than those of Christ in my behalf, which is unquestionably mocking God, and treating with the greatest possible indignity the Saviour whom he has sent into the world. I am to cast away all dependance on myself, and make the propitiation of Christ all my hope, and come with an unwavering faith therein, and then I honor the Saviour whom God has provided. But whether I bring a propitiation of my own, or say that no propitiation is needed, or place no confidence in that which God has provided, I do equally set at nought the propitiation of Christ.

The preacher remarked 2. That the power of the Gospel did not consist in mysteries. On this point I have only to remark, that the bible declares "great is the mystery of Godliness," and also speaks of "the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in us the hope of glory."

He also said 3. That the power of the gospel did not consist in human learning. On this point I have nothing to say but to assent.

He remarked 4th. That the power of the gospel did not consist in the doctrine of endless punishment. On this point I readily admit, that a mere belief in the doctrine of endless punishment, never did, never will save a man from sin. I have no doubt that many a sinner has lived and died in the belief of that doctrine, and been lost forever, and that many others will follow in the same course, loving their sins too well to renounce them, though fully aware that the end of the wicked must be "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." At the same time I know it to be a fact, that the doctrine of endless punishment has often been used by the Holy Spirit to arrest the sinner in his course of iniquity, and to lead him to seek a way of salvation from sin, though a mere belief in that doctrine has never saved any man, and never will. I think no candid mind will deny that to set clearly before a transgressor the certain consequences of his evil courses, has some tendency to restrain him, and to influence him to look after a way of safety. But it is admitted freely, that the *power* of the gospel to save men from sin does not consist in the doctrine of endless punishment.

The Preacher then proceeded to show

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II. In what the power of the gospel to save from sin, did consist; and stated that it consisted, 1st. In the love of God. 2nd. In the doctrine of a common brotherhood. 3rd. In the nature of its punishment. 4th. In the doctrine or hope of life and immortality.

Now the fundamental and fatal mistake of the preacher consisted, as I expect to show, from the bible, not so much in what he did say, as in what he did not say. I freely admit the influence of the love of God in saving men from sin; and that if ever saved from sin, it will be in loving God because He first loved us. I admit the influence of that new command of Christ, which requires all men to love one another as He has loved them. I admit that the punishment of the *Gospel* is disciplinary, yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them which are exercised thereby and consequently reformatory, and inflicted only in the present life; while the punishment of the future life which the bible calls the

second death, is retributive, i. e. meted out to all that cannot be reclaimed by the love of God, according to their works.

But that there will be those who will never be reclaimed from sin by the love of God, we learn from the bible when it speaks as in the second chap. of the 2nd Epist. to the Thess. of "them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And that for this cause God shall send them strong delusion to believe a lie that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." The bible also speaks of those who know not "that the goodness of God leadeth them to repentance; but after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

I come now to the main design of this discourse, which is to show that the Preacher to whom I allude, has entirely failed to show in what the power of the gospel to save men from sin does consist.-He has not even alluded in all the points which he has named, to that, without which, the gospel ever has been and ever will be, of none effect.

The apostle Paul tells us in what the power of the gospel consists, when he says as in the first chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only,

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but in *power and in the Holy Ghost.*" Peter in the first chapter of his 1st Epistle, speaks of "the things which were reported by them that have preached the gospel, *with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven.*"

Paul also says to Titus. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, i. e. from *sin*, *"by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost* which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." The power of the gospel then to save from sin, consists in the regenerating, renewing, and sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God, shed forth to attend the gospel through Jesus Christ our Savior, and without these influences, the Gospel with all the love which it reveals, is utterly powerless, in working in the hearts of men, that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Accordingly our Lord Jesus Christ at his ascension, after having commissioned his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father. "Ye shall receive power," said He, "After that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

Having therefore received from Christ the direction, "tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, *until ye be endued with power from on high*, and the assurance behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; and ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, the disciples returned unto Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey, and went into an upper chamber, and there continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, both men and women, until they were, on the day of Pentecost, all filled with the Holy Ghost. Then they preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and multitudes were pricked in their hearts and inquired what shall we do? And when others mocking said these men are full of new wine"-they replied, "this Jesus whom ye crucified hath God raised up whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the

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Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after have likewise foretold these days. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus Christ, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Here then we behold the power of the gospel to save men from sin:-It is in being attended by the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven. I freely admit that it is the setting forth of the love of God which saves men from sin, but in order that the love of God may have its cleansing efficacy-it must be as Paul says to the Romans, "the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Accordingly we find, that the success of the Apostles in saving men from sin by the preaching of the gospel,

is uniformly ascribed to the Holy Ghost. Barnabas was a man full of the Holy Ghost and faith, and much people were added to the Lord. Peter preached at the house of Cornelius, and the Holy Ghost fell on all which heard the word.-"Then remembered I," said he, "the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost."

The whole current of the New Testament shows that the work which should follow the coming of Christ, should be the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. Peter in the first chapter of his 1st Epistle tells us, that the prophets searched and inquired diligently respecting the time of this salvation, which the Spirit of Christ which was in them signified, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the *glory* that should follow. This glory was to be the outpouring of the Spirit as predicted by Joel; and which Ezekiel also had in view, when God is heard saying by the mouth of that prophet, "then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. And I will save you from all your uncleannesses." Here also is brought to view by the prophets that baptism of the Holy Ghost which was to be the establishment of the kingdom of Heaven upon earth-which kingdom we are told is "*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*"

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John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way of the Lord for the establishment of this kingdom. This work of preparation was performed by him, as he preached saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, the kingdom of "*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance, but there cometh one after me, mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose, He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

The same great truths Christ himself had in view, when he said to Nicodemus, "Verily verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born

of water and of the Spirit-he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." What is the kingdom of God? "Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." What is it to be born of water? It is to receive John's baptism unto repentance. That is, truly to repent and being forth fruits meet for repentance. This prepares the way of the kingdom of heaven in us. What is it to be born of the Spirit? It is to receive the baptism of Christ with the Holy Ghost, or to have Christ "sprinkle clean water upon us, and make us clean; and cleanse us from all our filthiness, and from all our idols." Then when this baptism of Christ is received, when this work of purification is wrought by being baptised with the Holy Ghost, we enter that "kingdom of God" which "is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And we have the positive asservation of the Son of God, "Verily, verily, I say unto you expect a man be born of water" i. e. led to the exercise of true repentance, "and of the Spirit" i. e. sprinkled with clean water, or baptised with the Holy Ghost, and cleansed from all his filthiness and from all his idols-he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," which "is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Here then we clearly see, my hearers, what it is which makes the gospel of Christ the power of God unto salvation from sin. It is Our Lord Jesus Christ, baptising with the Holy Ghost, and thus cleansing men from all their filthiness and from all their idols;

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thus bringing them into God's kingdom of righteousness, and establishing that kingdom in their hearts-filling them with righteousness, as Christ says those shall be, who hunger and thirst after it; and giving them peace and joy in the Holy Ghost-making their peace as a river and their righteousness as the waves of the sea. This gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. It is the dispensation of God's Almighty Spirit, "Burying us with Jesus Christ, by baptism of the Holy Ghost into death" i. e. making us dead to sin-"that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life." It is enabling us to "put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to put on the new man,

which after God" (i. e. after the likeness of God) "is created in righteousness and true holiness."

REMARKS

1. We may see that while the advocates of Universal Salvation take correct ground, in assuming it as the design of the gospel to save men from sin, they fail entirely of gaining that salvation, by leaving out of the account the work of the Holy Ghost in renewing and cleansing the heart. "Create in me" said the Psalmist "a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

Here it is recognized as the work of God to save from sin, to cleanse the heart, while the Universalist expects to cleanse his own heart, by his contemplations of the universal love of God. I know it is by the revelation of the love of God that the heart must be cleansed-but this love as I have already said, great as it is, is powerless on the hearts of men, until "shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them." Paul speaks of "the gift of the grace of God given unto him by the effectual working of God's power." It is in this way that every gift of God's grace is communicated: only by the effectual working of God's power. The bible represents unholy men as dead in trespasses and sins, and as having no spiritual life but in Christ. When our first parents ate the forbidden fruit they died a spiritual death, and all their posterity are under the power of that death,

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and will remain under it forever, unless raised by the power of God. Hence we hear Christ say "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. I am the way and the truth and the life. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." He therefore who would have spiritual life is to look to Christ for it. He is to seek, through faith in Christ, that baptism of the Holy Ghost which will cleanse him from sin; or in other words, raise him up from his

spiritual death, and make him alive to the love and enjoyment of God. That same God who first breathed into man the breath of spiritual life, so that he became a living soul-must again by the power of that same Spirit breathe spiritual life anew, or the sinner will remain dead in sin forever. All his contemplations of the love of God, without this Baptism of the Holy Ghost, this resurrection from spiritual death by the power of Christ, will avail nothing. Men will by such contemplations, become no better than whited sepulchres. If the outside is beautiful, the uncleanness will all remain within. "If ye believe not that I am he," said Christ "ye shall *die in your sins.*" "And whither I go ye cannot come." If ye believe not that I am who? Why the Savior whom God promised to send into the world; and whose "name was called Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins."

The question then, for you to settle, my hearers, is this. Have you been baptised by the Holy Ghost? Have you been raised up by the power of Christ's spiritual resurrection from the death of sin and made alive unto God, and had that kingdom of God established within you which "is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." If not you are dead in sin, and your expectation of going where Christ is, in your present state, will avail you nothing. To the Jews, Christ said, ye will not come unto me that ye may have life. Coming to the doctrine of Universal Salvation then, will not cleanse men from sin, and give them spiritual life. They must come to Christ for it by faith, and receive it by the power of the Holy Ghost, for "the kingdom of God is not in word but in power." I beseech you therefore my hearers to abandon all

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hope of salvation from sin from the doctrine of Universal Salvation. "Why seek ye the living among the dead." "Christ is not there, he is risen."

There is no spiritual life in that system. No baptism of the Holy Ghost. They know not what it means. Christ has never been revealed in them, "the hope of glory." They know nothing about "the riches of the glory of that mystery." They are only expecting to be saved from sin, because all will be; and are not looking to

Christ by faith, hungering and thirsting after righteousness and expecting to be filled-nor do they know what it is to obtain the witness which Abel did, that they are righteous, nor the testimony that Enoch had, that he pleased God. "It is the Spirit which beareth witness because the Spirit is truth," and when we obtain the witness of the Spirit that we are righteous, by having Christ baptize us with the Holy Ghost, then we know in our own blessed experience, what it is which makes the gospel "the power of God unto salvation (from sin) to every one that believeth;" and are prepared with Paul to say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

Let that soul who fastens his hope of redemption from sin, on the doctrine of Universal Salvation-remember that Christ has said, "if ye believe not that *I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*" This dying in sin will be found fearful indeed. It will be the portion of all such as will not "receive the truth in the love of it that they might be saved" from sin.

2. There is reason to fear, that very many who regard themselves as in a state of salvation, have mistaken the grand design of the gospel. They seem to suppose, that the great design of the gospel is, to save men from hell, at the close of their existence on earth, and that by looking to Christ to save them from the final doom of the wicked, when they die, they are then to live in a great measure in sin, inasmuch as their salvation is secured. Many, who say that they groan being burdened, under a sense of their vast uncleannesses, have no hope of being cleansed from sin, until death comes to their deliverance, supposing that, somehow or other, about the close of life, they shall be so cleansed, as to be meet for heaven. This is true of many who believe that the future doom of

the wicked is, to be punished with everlasting destruction, and of many who rest their hopes on the doctrine of Universal Salvation. Many of both classes are supposing, that, a little before death, or in the very instant of death or immediately after death, some thing or other will transpire, that will complete in their souls the necessary work of purification, and make them fit for heaven. 'Tis strange

that such vast multitudes should have imbibed such a notion as this, and should be resting such amazing interests and expectations upon it, when the bible nowhere intimates that any such change is to take place in any soul at or about the time of departure from the world. On the contrary, the bible does teach most plainly, that Christ is the only Savior from sin, and that he came to *save us while we live*, and to preserve us blameless until we die. With this truth in view, we hear Zacharias, "filled with the Holy Ghost," prophesying and saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began; that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he sware to our Father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear *in holiness and righteousness, before him*, all the days of our life." Here is Christ our horn of salvation, even Jesus saving his people from their sins-but instead of saving them at death, it is "*all the days of their life*." Saving them too, out of the hand of all the enemies of their souls, unto *holiness and righteousness* all the days of their life.

With the same blessed truth in view, we hear Paul saying to the Corinthians, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ, that in every thing ye are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end, blameless, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye

were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." Faithful to preserve blameless to the end. This same faithfulness of God in preserving his people blameless, after enriching them with the blessedness of full salvation from sin, Paul recognized again in writing to the Thessalonians. "The very God of peace sanctify you

wholly, and your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.-Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it." He says also again, to the same church, "but the Lord is faithful who shall establish you and keep you from evil." Thus plainly does the bible present to us the doctrine of salvation from sin through Christ-in this life, and during all this life, while it never speaks of death as the time of salvation. Its language is, "now is the accepted time, Behold now is the day of salvation." And the bible nowhere regards any thing as salvation but salvation from sin.

You must then, my hearers, have salvation from sin while you live, or die in your sins, and where Christ has gone, never go.-Any hope but this is baseless-for Christ declares that at his coming, he will give every man according as his work shall be, and that the unjust shall be unjust still, and the filthy, filthy still-while the righteous and the holy shall so remain. Rev. xxii. 12. O that every heart who hears me, might be brought by the Holy Ghost, to cry out, how shall this salvation from sin be obtained?

In reply to such an inquiry I answer-The blessed bible tells us, "that the divine power of God hath given unto us all things, that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." These promises we are also told, are "all yea and Amen, in Christ, to the glory of God by us," so that if we seek by earnest prayer and faith in Christ, to have these promises fulfilled in us, their fulfilment is sure.-These promises are such as the following. "Ask, and ye shall receive-ask, and ye shall find-knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth-and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son

ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone, or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent, or if he ask an egg will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, knew how

to give good things unto your children; how much more shall your Father who is in heaven, give the *Holy Spirit* to them that ask him." I have already shown that the design of this gift or baptism of the Holy Spirit, which we receive through faith in Christ, is to save from sin. To "sprinkle with clean water, and cleanse us from all our filthiness and all our idols." This is the baptism of Christ, which cleanses from sin, or makes us dead to sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. If you would have this "gift of the Holy Ghost," this "baptism of Christ," this salvation from sin, seek it, with earnest prayer, and faith in Christ, and you shall find in your own blessed experience, that "all things whatsoever you ask in prayer believing you do receive." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after this righteousness, for they shall be filled," and filled as we are assured, in the covenant and oath of God, "*all the days of their life.*" Come I beseech you, by faith, to Christ, for this salvation, and you shall find, that "the gospel of Christ" is indeed "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." All this hearer you must receive, or Christ will say to you at last, "I know you not whence ye are, depart from me ye that work iniquity."

O, it is a dreadful opiate to the consciences of men, to teach them, that though they sin against God every day, in thought word and deed, they may yet be saved from sin, when they die, and be received to heaven. It lulls into carnal security. It operates as a standing excuse for all the iniquities which men may chance to commit. While on the contrary, our Savior's doctrine, that if we believe not in Him as our Savior from sin, we shall die in our sins, and where he has gone never go, tends most directly and powerfully to arouse from the fatal slumbers of worldliness and sinful pleasure, to cry mightily to God in Christ's name, for deliverance from all our spiritual foes-and for strength and grace "to serve God without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." God grant that this may be

the earnest cry of every soul, and be continued by every one of you until you find your feet in that "highway of holiness over which the

unclean shall not pass." He that thinks that he shall certainly be saved from sin at last, will be almost sure to be saying, "a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep." May the Lord save us out of this destructive snare of the devil, and bring us all to behold by faith, "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." Then shall we "obtain the witness that we are righteous, God testifying," within us by his spirit "of his" own "gifts," and "then shall we not be ashamed when we have respect unto all his commandments."

3. We may see it to be a matter of unspeakable consequence, that we do not trifle with, nor resist the Holy Ghost. He trifles with the Holy Ghost, who thinks lightly of the pollutions which God charges upon him, and will not seek to be cleansed by the Spirit of God. He resists the Holy Ghost who will not yield to the motives of the gospel, and come to Christ for the Holy Spirit that he may have life. If any of you my hearers desire the salvation of God-let me say to you as did David to Solomon his son. "Thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. If thou seek him he will be found of thee, but *if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever.*" The influences of God's Spirit are the waters of salvation, from sin.- They can be had by being sought through faith in Christ. "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." "The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Amen.

